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# Message Text

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60
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAJ-01 IO-10 DPW-01 NIC-01 /076 W
---------- 109612
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8580
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY SAIGON
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 4105

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, CB
SUBJECT: SOVIETS STRENGTHEN ENDORSEMENT OF CAMBODIAN INSURGENTS

1. SUMMARY: SOVIET CHIEF OF STATE PODGORNY'S GREETINGS TO SIHANOUK AND FOUR PRESS COMMENTARIES MARKED THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF SIHANOUK'S "UNITED FRONT" OF CAMBODIA. THE COMMENTARIES, INCLUDING ONE BY YURI ZHUKOV, DENOUNCED THE U.S. SHARPLY, HIGHLIGHTED THE FUTILITY OF EFFORTS TO KEEP THE LON NOL REGIME AFLOAT, AND ENDORSED THE "PATRIOTS." ZHUKOV SPOKE OF SIHANOUK'S REGIME AS THE "LEGITIMATE" GOVERNMENT. THE OTHER COMMENTARIES DID NOT, HOWEVER, MENTION THE PRINCE OR ANY OTHER INSURGENT LEADERS. THUS, WHILE RAISING THE DECIBELS, MOSCOW REMAINS CAUTIOUS ABOUT THE SHAPE OF A NEW REGIME IN PHNOM PENH. END SUMMARY.

2. PODGORNY'S GREETING, LIKE HIS MESSAGE LAST YEAR, WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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ADDRESSED TO SIHANOUK AS "HEAD OF STATE" AND "CHAIRMAN OF

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FUNK." THE MESSAGE DIFFERED LITTLE IN CONTENT OR TONE FROM LAST YEAR'S.

3. UNLIKE PREVIOUS YEARS, HOWEVER, SOVIET MEDIA USED THE ANNIVERSARY TO CONFIRM MOSCOW'S SHIFT TOWARD ENDORSEMENT OF AN EARLY INSURGENT VICTORY. PRAVDA COMMENTATOR YURI ZHUKOV, IDENTIFIED AS A MEMBER OF THE PRESIDIUM OF THE WORLD PEACE COUNCIL, LAUNCHED A "WEEK OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE" WITH A HARD-HITTING COMMENTARY IN PRAVDA (MARCH 23). AFTER RECOUNTING THE 1970 "COUP", WHICH HE SAID WAS CARRIED OUT BY AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE, AND RECITING EXAMPLES OF AMERICAN MILITARY INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT FOR THE LON NOL REGIME, ZHUKOV SAYS THAT "THE PEOPLES'" OPPOSITION TO LON NOL IS SUPPORTED BY "PEACE-LOVING COUNTRIES," AND ASSERTS THAT MOSCOW STANDS ON THE SIDE OF THE "LIBERATION" FORCES. HE REFERS TO PREVIOUS SOVIET ENDORSEMENTS OF SIHANOUK'S REGIME AS THE "LEGAL GOVERNMENT" AND THE "SOLE LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE," AND CITES KHIEU SAMPHAN'S RECENT CLAIM THAT GRUNK NOW CONTROLS 97 PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY'S TERRITORY. (KHIEU IS IDENTIFIED IN THIS REFERENCE AS DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF GRUNK.) ZHUKOV CITES OPPOSITION IN THE U.S. TO FURTHER AID AND WRITES THAT "EVEN SENATOR JACKSON" HAS CALLED FOR EFFORTS TO FORM A "NEW GOVERNMENT." BUT A CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT EXISTS, EXCLAIMS ZHUKOV, WHICH IS RECOGNIZED BY 62 COUNTRIES, AND HE CONCLUDES WITH FRATERNAL GREETINGS TO THE CAMBODIAN FIGHTERS AND A PLEDGE OF SOVIET SUPPORT FOR THEIR JUST CAUSE. HE CITES BREZHNEV'S STATEMENT TO THE 24TH PARTY CONGRESS ENDORSING THE "HEROIC PEOPLES OF INDOCHINA."

4. SIMILAR COMMENTARIES APPEAR IN IZVESTIYA (MARCH 22) BY INDOCHINA REGULAR IL'INSKIY, IN RED STAR (MARCH 22) BY LEONT'YEV AND VINOGRADOV, AND IN SOVIET INDUSTRY (MARCH 23) BY LEBEDEV. ALL MAKE SIMILAR POINTS ABOUT THE HISTORY OF "U.S. AGGRESSION," U.S. CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC OPPOSITION TO "PENTAGON" EFFORTS TO GET MORE AID, AND THE FEEBLENESS OF THE LON NOL REGIME. RED STAR CITES UNNAMED AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS QUOTING LON NOL
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SOLDIERS ON THE FUTILITY OF THEIR EFFORTS. THESE COMMENTARIES CONCLUDE WITH RINGING ENDORSEMENTS OF THE "PATRIOTS" IN THE NAME OF THE "SOVIET PEOPLE." INTERESTINGLY, NONE OF THEM EXCEPT ZHUKOV'S MENTIONS SIHANOUK, KHIEU SAMPHAN OR OTHER INSURGENT LEADERS BY NAME.

5. THE EARLY EVENING TELEVISION NEWS PROGRAM ON MARCH 23 DIRECTED ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF ITS FIFTEEN MINUTES TO A

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STATEMENT BY A GRUNK OFFICIAL IN MOSCOW ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE FRONT AND ITS BRIGHT FUTURE.

6. COMMENT: THIS MEDIA OUTPOURING, FOLLOWING A SIMILAR BURST OF COMMENTARY EARLIER THIS MONTH (MOSCOW 3039), IS SYMPTOMATIC OF A FURTHER SOVIET EFFORT TO LINE UP ON WHAT IT CLEARLY SEES AS THE WINNING SIDE. LIKEWISE THE SHARPLY ANTI-U.S. CONTENT OF THESE COMMENTARIES WOULD SEEM TO REFLECT THE FACT THAT THE SOVIETS DO NOT EXPECT DECISIVE U.S. ACTION TO STEM THE COURSE OF NEGATIVE EVENTS, WHICH THEREBY REDUCES THE DETENTE COST OF MORE OPEN SOVIET SUPPORT FOR THE INSURGENTS. ZHUKOV'S USE OF THE VAGUE BREZHNEV QUOTE, HIS RECITATION OF PREVIOUS SOVIET ENDORSEMENTS OF THE LEGITIMACY OF SIHANOUK'S REGIME AND HIS MENTION OF KHIEU SAMPHAN, KEEP OPEN THE OPTION OF FURTHERSOVIET RAPPROCHMENT WITH THE PRINCE AND/OR THE INSURGENTS. BUT THE ABSENCE OF SIMILAR ECHOES IN THE OTHER COMMENTARIES REFLECTS MOSCOW'S CONTINUED CAUTION ON THE SHAPE OF A NEW REGIME IN PHNOM PENH.
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